

Hobbies

Plain bills aimed at slowing counterfeiters

By Roger Boye

Here are answers to more questions about coins and currency.

Q—My family was impressed with the colorful currency we found in so many European countries. Why doesn't the U.S. add bright colors to its money?

P. O., Chicago Heights

A—Officials believe the uniform black and green ink forces consumers to look at a bill's design to determine the denomination. That extra bit of scrutiny helps to reduce the number of counterfeits in circulation, or so the theory goes.

Q—How much would dealers pay for old silver dollars? All 12 of my coins have long since lost their shine.

T. Y., Chicago

A—Prices vary greatly with date, mint mark and condition. However, many coin shops will offer at least \$10 each for dollars minted between 1878 and 1904, and \$7.50 or more for dollars dated 1921 to 1935.

Q—Some dealers say in advertisements that they will pay more for ANACS and PCGS coins. What do those letters mean?

B. M., Oak Lawn

A—"ANACS" and "PCGS" are the initials of two services that authenticate and grade old coins. Rarities with "certification papers" from such services often bring a special premium on the hobby market.

Q—We saved several Eisenhower silver dollars in the late 1970s. How much is the metal worth today?

G. J., Chicago

A—Contrary to popular belief, all Ike dollars made for circulation between 1971 and 1978 con-

tain just copper and nickel. The only silver specimens were sold to collectors in plastic holders. Silver Ikes usually retail in the \$5 to \$45 range, depending on date and other factors.

Questions about old coins or paper money? Send your queries to Roger Boye, Chicago Tribune, 435 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60611. Be sure to include a self-addressed, stamped envelope if you want a personal reply and allow at least three weeks for the answer.